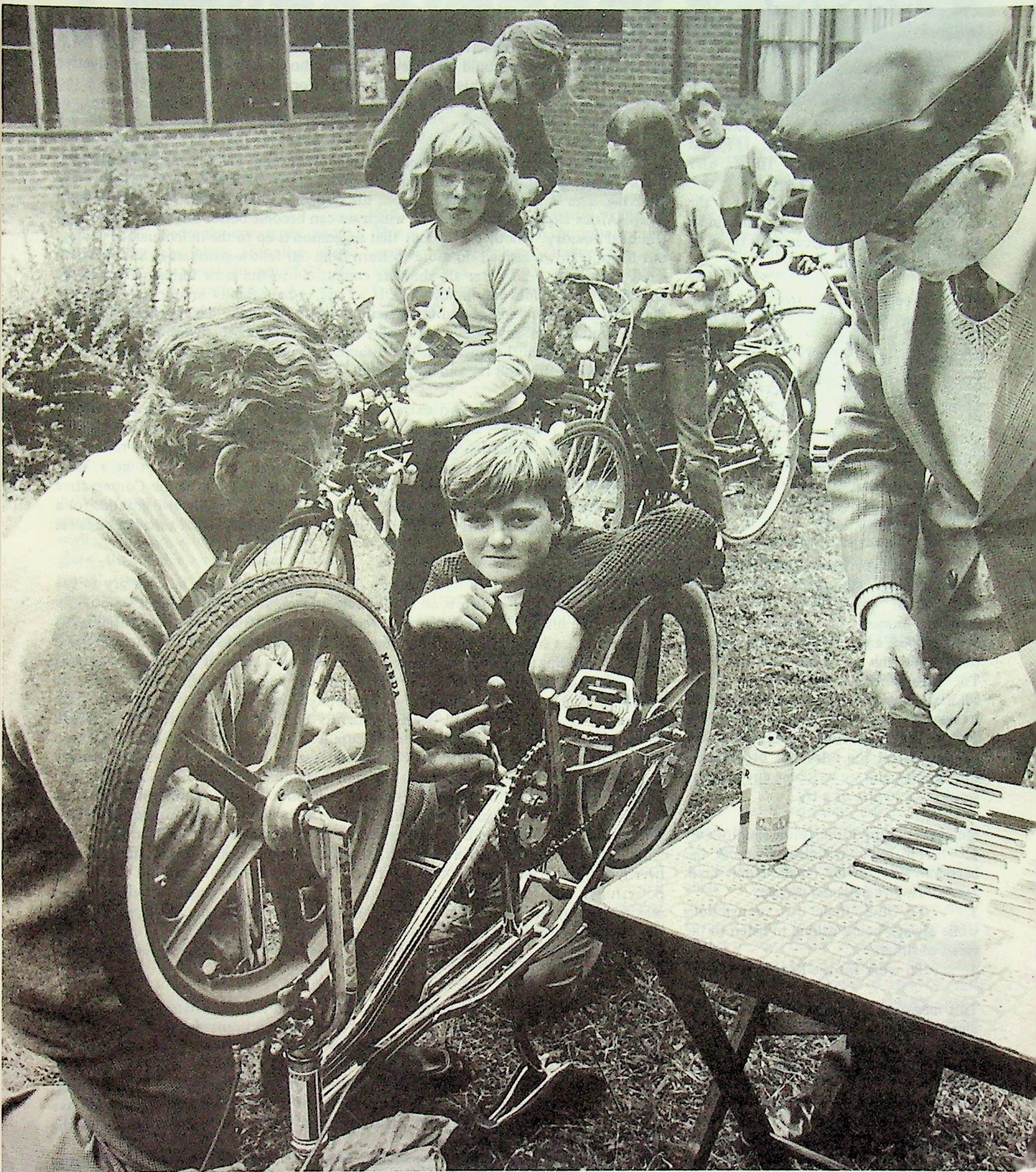


Point Three

November
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The monthly magazine of TOC H



Point Three

Editor: John Mitchell

Editorial Assistant: Barbara Martin

Designer: Sybil A Chick

Letters, articles and news items are welcomed, and should be addressed to the Toc H Editorial Office, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT (Telephone: 0296 623911)

Opinions expressed (including the editorial) are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement.

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Toc H seeks to create friendship and understanding among people of all backgrounds and beliefs. Local group activities range from holidays for the handicapped and children's playschemes to arts festivals and even bird watching. Toc H is short for Talbot House – the soldiers' club in Belgium founded by the Reverend 'Tubby' Clayton in 1915. Today Toc H provides opportunities for people to test the relevance of practical Christianity and we welcome anyone who would like to give us a try.

Members accept a four fold commitment:

1. To build friendships across the barriers that divide man from man.
2. To give personal service.
3. To find their own convictions while always being willing to listen to the views of others.
4. To work for the Kingdom of God.

This magazine, which acts as a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world in which we live, takes its title from the third of these Four Points – to think fairly.

Cover picture

Members in Sussex post-coding bicycles for security. See feature 'A busy summer in Uckfield'.

Photo: Kent & Sussex Courier

Editorial

UNDERSTANDING SOUTH AFRICA

Very few intelligent people will not have devoted some time recently to pondering the problems of South Africa. The current crisis there has been thrust at us by every form of news media, and it would be a clever person who could avoid it, and an insensitive one not to have been troubled by the situation. For those of us in Toc H there is the added concern that there are hundreds of our fellow-members, of all colours, deep in that situation.

So what does Fairmindedness demand of us? In the first place, it demands that we listen to the point of view of informed people, from whatever position they are speaking. This issue carries a letter from the outgoing Hon Administrator of Toc H in South Africa explaining one way in which we can become better informed about that troubled country. Whether we adopt that suggestion is up to the individual, of course, but if not, can we instead do more to learn from our fellow-members in South Africa what the situation is? After all, they are committed to the same fundamentals as we are, and that includes Fairmindedness. If we are to be a family in any real sense, we must at least listen and try and understand, even if we finally decide to disagree and act accordingly. In any family there may come a point at which we must reject the point of view of another member, but a family is not worth the name unless we first listen to it honestly, and try and understand.

We also print in this issue two extracts from an article written by Alan Paton for a South African magazine, on the subject of Sanctions. As the past few months have gone by, with an escalating chorus of cries for Sanctions, it is important to wrestle with this problem and to try and take on board both arguments. The fact that, as Alan points out, big business agrees with him (and of course the bulk of the Conservative party in this country) does not, of itself, mean he is wrong. It may give grounds for a degree of suspicion, but it is not impossible that, occasionally, what suits big business is also morally right!

In some ways the very idea of isolating a deviant regime seems to be contrary to the very nature of Toc H, which is about building bridges. On the other hand, we do have before us the history of the sporting boycott of South Africa, and the fact that sport in South Africa has made significant steps towards multi-racialism. I know some will deny a causal link, but common sense suggests there is a link and that the boycott has been effective. Sanctions can work, and in the last analysis can be a way of getting across to another that a message, so far ignored, can no longer be ignored with impunity. We have to try and decide, patiently and carefully, whether there is any better option left open, and whether the cure will be worse than the illness, as Alan himself argues. We also have to search our hearts as to whether, in seeking to pressure another country, we are indulging in the time honoured practise of seeking moles in others eyes and ignoring our own beams. It is undoubtedly more comfortable to condemn apartheid abroad than to confront the rising racism in our own communities. The recent horror in Handsworth has been a vivid reminder that all is far from well with race relations in Britain. The fact that discrimination and deprivation are not overtly enshrined in our law does not mean they do not exist or are not felt just as powerfully. The fact that a person's colour puts them at a major disadvantage in seeking employment, for example, is acutely damaging. It is equally damaging whether the discrimination is part of a formal system of 'apartheid', or the de facto reality in a nation that claims to abhor 'apartheid'. Perhaps the latter is sometimes even more frustrating.

This year is the 60th Anniversary of Toc H in South Africa. Whatever our personal response to the major political issues of the day, it is important also that we recognise the brave witness that Toc H South Africa has given for all that is good in Toc H. We should rejoice that it has become a truly multi-racial movement and that, through Toc H, there is real reconciliation taking place. If our own record was as impressive, or if we had survived as many difficulties as has Toc H in South Africa, we would have cause to be justly proud. We send our warm good wishes and congratulations to the family there.

JEM

Help the Aged Lifeline Appeal

Clare Hemsley



Photo: Help the Aged

As part of its continuing programme to focus attention on the needs of the elderly, Help the Aged is launching a major new appeal to provide safety and security to those living alone.

The Charity is deeply concerned about our elderly population who live alone particularly those over the age of 75. By the year 2000 it is anticipated that there will be nearly one million more people in this age bracket than there are today. Of the ten million pensioners in Britain, approximately three million live alone. This percentage will undoubtedly rise still further with the upward trend in the divorce rate. In addition different generations tend, nowadays, not to live in the same area.

All this means that many more people must face old age by themselves, often with no nearby friends or relatives. But, given the choice, many elderly people would prefer to live independently in their own homes rather than go into full-time care or sheltered housing. Help the Aged believes that elderly people should be offered the chance of remaining in their own homes even though they may be apprehensive about doing so for fear of feeling vulnerable and insecure.

The Charity wishes to concentrate the public's mind on the plight of the old person living alone and isolated in a busy society where most people, apart from wardens, social workers, and other carers, have little or no time to spend on them.

Help the Aged is already trying to alleviate the problem by providing funds for day centres, day hospitals and minibuses. It is going to extend its existing pattern of care by attracting enough funds to enable elderly people living alone to be offered the security and reassurance of an emergency communications system. It firmly believes that elderly people living alone should have this vital link with the outside world and it is for this reason that the Lifeline Alarm Appeal was launched in September. The Appeal aims to equip thousands of elderly people all over Britain with an emergency communications device which has a 24-hours-a-day link to help in crisis.

Help the Aged, having studied the available emergency communications systems designed for elderly people, has initially chosen the Piper Lifeline unit which is probably the most sophisticated and up to date unit currently available. This is a two-way speech communications system with telephone facilities which is linked to a control centre, manned 24-hours-a-day — There are already more than 120 Piper control centres located throughout the British Isles. These are part of a network which is already used by many local authorities and housing associations — collectively providing cover for more than 250,000 elderly people. Each control centre is manned by a team of sympathetic and experienced operators. When an alarm call is received details of the caller (name, address, next of kin, friends, doctor, social workers, medical condition, etc) appear on a visual display screen. Therefore, in circumstances where the caller is unable to speak, the operator can summon immediately the emergency services or contact a friend or neighbour.

This two-way speech communications system operates in three major ways — as an emergency alarm, as a loud-speaking, hands-free means of telephone communication and as a modern push button telephone.

Lifeline is the first product of its kind to provide a Remote Answering Facility. This enables users to receive a telephone call and conduct a conversation simply by pressing their radio alarm trigger which can be worn either as a pendant or carried in a pocket. A Remote Answering Facility is of particular benefit to an elderly person who is bedridden or capable only of limited movement. In addition, the Lifeline's 'hands-free operation' enables it to be used without the handset when a call is made. The call is relayed through the high-quality loudspeaker and the sensitive microphone picks up the user's voice.

Because an elderly person is likely to use a few telephone numbers frequently, each Lifeline unit can be programmed to dial the three most frequently used numbers at the touch of a single button using the fast dialling feature. Up to eight further numbers can be programmed for two-key

manipulation for fast contact with family members, friends, or services. Any other calls can be made simply by depressing the keys in the conventional way.

The unit has an illuminated alarm button which can be found in the dark without any difficulty. It is important that Lifeline is easy to connect in an elderly person's home. The unit only requires a 13-amp 3-pin electric mains outlet and an ordinary telephone jackplug socket for immediate connection. In the event of mains power failure, a dry battery back-up system provides four hours operation including 30 minutes of actual use.

Help the Aged aims, in the first phase of its regional Lifeline programme, to provide as many as possible elderly people who live alone with the security cover of a Lifeline unit linked to central control. Each unit costs £334, which includes the total cost of first year maintenance and a proportion of local authority monitoring costs (this will depend on individual authorities).

Help the Aged is seeking maximum support for its Lifeline Appeal in order to publicise and promote what will be an extremely vigorous and comprehensive fund-raising campaign.

(Note: In a covering letter with this article Help the Aged point out that they do not advocate the 'lifeline' emergency communications system replacing regular visits to the elderly in the community. *'In fact this is one thing that we have stressed over the years since we first initiated the Good Neighbour Scheme back in the 60s. However, "Lifeline" units will bring a sense of security and peace of mind to those elderly living alone, and of course in an emergency "Lifeline" actually saves lives.*

'We do have trained speakers around the country who would be delighted to visit Toc H groups and give a short talk and show our "Lifeline" video. I would appreciate your mentioning this, and that anyone interested in the facility should initially contact Mrs Sarah Shepherd, at Help the Aged, St James's Walk, London EC1R 0BE.'

Round and about

A Devon Holiday

Betty Dean writes to tell us of the East Devon District Children's Project 'After the first few days during which the leaders, volunteers and children took one another's measure, there is no doubt that the venture was a great success. The young leaders, Carolyn and Peter Collins, did an excellent job, backed by eight volunteers recruited from various parts of the country, none of the latter having been on a project before. The ten girls (there should have been 12) – a mixture of coloured and white – came to us through the Children's Country Holidays Fund and all were deprived in one way or another. Apart from contributions from each of the Branches in the District, financial help came from the Royal Jubilee and Prince's Trusts, the Norman Family Trust, the Exmouth Round Table and the Toc H South Western Counties Branch. DER loaned us a television set free of charge.

'In spite of the inclement weather, the four outdoor activities were blessed with sunshine. These were a river trip, a barbecue, an evening with canoes (kindly arranged by the Woodbury

Christchurch Youth Club) and a coach outing to Farway Countryside Park. A Puppet Show, given single handed by the Revd Magor of the Budleigh Salterton Methodist Church, was a hilarious occasion and very much enjoyed. On the children's last evening the leaders and volunteers laid on a party, augmented by delicious food provided by the cook, whose varied menus during the holiday were much appreciated by all. Women Toc H members gave help each day in the kitchen, whilst the men helped with transport etc, and both men and women gave moral support during the project. Alice Welford and I were in a position to be on hand most days, either with transport or by just being there, and I know that this support was greatly appreciated, especially by the leaders. To us both, it was a joy.

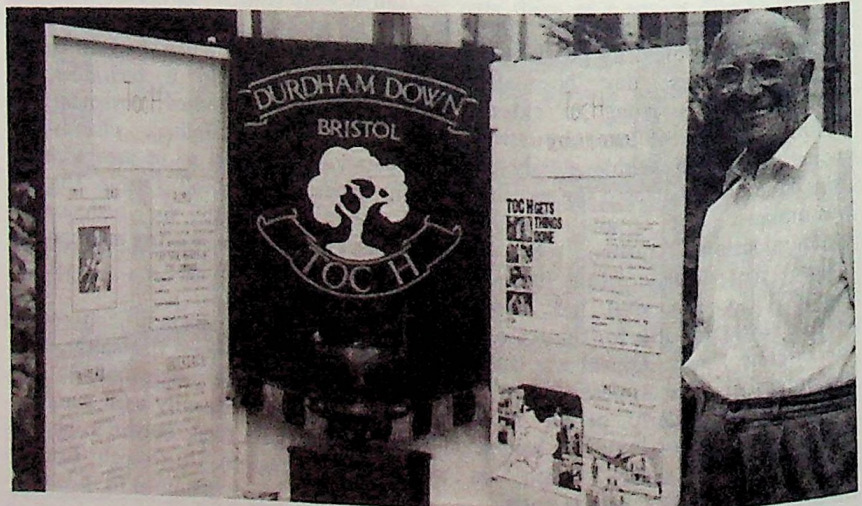
'How does one judge the success of a project? If evidence were needed it was certainly shown on the day the children went home, when there were copious tears and many hugs and kisses exchanged between the children, the leaders and volunteers. Those of us who had a hand in organising the holiday were amply rewarded.'



Photo: Melanie Tolman

Local Publicity

Durham Down Branch in Bristol was invited to take part in a local Festival by erecting a stand at a Garden Party for the handicapped in July. Jack Ostler writes: 'We gladly accepted the invitation and spent an evening deciding how to make a good impression on the visitors. A wooden background was constructed on which the Branch banner was hung and surrounding it posters giving details of Branch activities. In front, on a table, were the Toc H lamp, many copies of Point Three and other literature about the Movement. The stand attracted a lot of interest and we hope good will come from our effort'.



Our last issue included a major feature on Mundesley House, the new Toc H Centre in Norfolk. During July two separate working weeks were organised there by Melton Mowbray (M) Branch with a grant from the Warden Manor Trust. Seventeen Toc H members and ten young volunteers from King Edward VII Upper School joined forces to make a real impact on the new centre. Don Cullen takes up the story:

'On Saturday morning, 13 July the sun shone on the first party of 16 folk, young and not so young, who gathered with suitcases, sleeping bags, transistors, paint brushes, rollers, scythes, rakes, forks and two dogs! Following hesitant hello's and tender goodbye's to those left behind, the Mundesley adventure had begun. The coach journey provided an opportunity of getting to know you and by the time we eventually stopped for coffee we were a group and not 16 isolated individuals.

'We arrived at Mundesley to find that the Centre had a completely refitted kitchen equipped to a high standard, ample accommodation in need of decoration, umpteen litres of paint and ground with encroaching weeds and undergrowth waist high. Beds were allocated, a washing up rota prepared and after our first meal and an appraisal of the tasks facing us, we all ventured out to enjoy Mundesley village, beach and cliffs.

'The mornings and some afternoons of the week turned into a hive of activity. Woodwork was sandpapered and undercoated as we progressed to redecorate the hall, staircase and landing and the 17 doors that led off to one place or another. Scrub clearance got underway, a three foot path developed into a six foot drive as undergrowth was cleared back. Paths and patios were weeded. Showers, washbasins and bathroom were scoured and windows, including the 20 in the sun lounge, were left to sparkle. Two more volunteers arrived mid-week armed with tool boxes and eager to erect working tops and cupboards and instal new power points.

'Afternoon trips were made to Langham glass works, Norfolk Broads, Wroxham Craft Centre, Yarmouth and we had the luxury of a whole day to tour Norwich. A delight of this first week's cuisine was Thursday dinner when the student volunteers prepared and served Spaghetti Bolognese with enough spaghetti to set up a chain of Italian restaurants! Late evenings were spent in meeting young members of Toc H from Norwich; games of rounders including the Young Senior Citizens; an introduction to sequence dancing and an entertainment highlight when the sixth form harmony group presented 'Bright Eyes' to an appreciative audience.

'On the middle Saturday, 20 July the second work party arrived at Mundesley and were met with hysterical arm waving, cheers and a welcome hug here and there. During lunch together experiences were shared until we had to say goodbye with a farewell hug or two ...

'At last we could claim that we achieved what we had set out to do. The central part of the Centre was completely redecorated and the grounds cleared of rubbish and looking neat and tidy. The work was evidently done to the satisfaction of the Friends of the Mundesley House Centre who presented Melton Mowbray Toc H with a certificate confirming them as Founder Members of the Centre in appreciation of a job well done.

'This report can do little more than give a general idea of how time and energy was spent on the project. They do not perhaps convey that it was a fun packed, tiring two weeks enjoyed by everyone who participated. Everyone learnt a lot about those they were associated with and more about themselves and found that friendship, fellowship, love and understanding can transcend a new experience for everyone involved, to be with the older generation and to experience their views and ideas and to mix freely without restriction. It was made more enjoyable to know it was worthwhile for a good cause.'

Three wishes in Huddersfield

Huddersfield District organised a 'Wishing project' on an August Saturday. Based on the Toc H Plus Bus, members of the public were asked to make three wishes. Elaine Lockwood explains more fully.

'What luck to be given an opportunity to make three wishes for the betterment of one's town. Most people find plenty to grumble about when chatting generally on the bus, but when you ask them the question "eyeball to eyeball", no-one can think of anything! It's unbelievable, yet that is what we found. Various promptings, however, did produce the usual requests, such as pleas



for more toilets, seats, better shops, facilities for young teenagers, clocks and seats in shops. More employment was often mentioned, but we explained that that was outside our brief! There were also many objections to the new concrete buildings which have replaced the old, but extremely well-built, stone buildings such as our Market Hall and banks.

'The whole project was based on the Plus Bus which proved of great interest, and we provided coffee and biscuits for all and sundry. We had Toc H activities well to the fore, and altogether it was a lovely day (and one which happened to be fine) for those of us taking part. It was Toc H at its best, and how nice for us to be working together on a project.

'We are now in the process of collating all the requests which we now hope to take up with local Councillors and the Council. We fervently hope that we can get at least some through the bureaucracy of the Town Council.'

Fruits of a Day Conference

Molly Oxenford tells us how Broadwater Branch in Sussex adopted a suggestion from Bournemouth after a Conference last Autumn. They now run a Jigsaw Club, although most of the puzzlers are housebound and cannot get out to meet each other.

'When we started it was easy to collect puzzles but clients were a bit slow. Now, however, we have as many as the two organisers can cope with but far from being just docile elderly waiting for the next collection or delivery, they are extremely varied and interesting. How often Toc H has brought this home to me!

'Mrs N prefers flowers or gardens and nothing less than 1,000 pieces; Miss I likes things with plenty of colour; Mrs G wants houses or cottages and Mr P wants boats! A neighbour with a mentally retarded nephew who was difficult to amuse was overjoyed to discover that he loved jigsaws and we kept him supplied

for two happy weeks. A recent friend who was depressed and lonely now is learning to do puzzles but likes small ones. One surprising puzzler was rather like the woman of Samaria - she had had two husbands but the one she was living with was not her husband! She had had a severe operation and her Meals on Wheels deliverer introduced her to us. . .

'... Two of us do the main job with the puzzles but everyone keeps an eye open for needy people and everyone helps when we need new ones. It's been quite a good thing to do as we are a rather tottery Branch and cannot be as active as we were.

Art and Craft in Somerset

Chard's venture into the world of Crafts and Hobbies Exhibition was a splendid success. People thronged the Guildhall throughout Saturday, 10 August and watched demonstrations of spinning, lace-making, smocking, pottery, enamelling, calligraphy, lapidary, basketwork, wood-turning, flower arranging, silverwork, railway modelling, piano action repairs, goldfish breeding, and 'bonsai' cultivation.

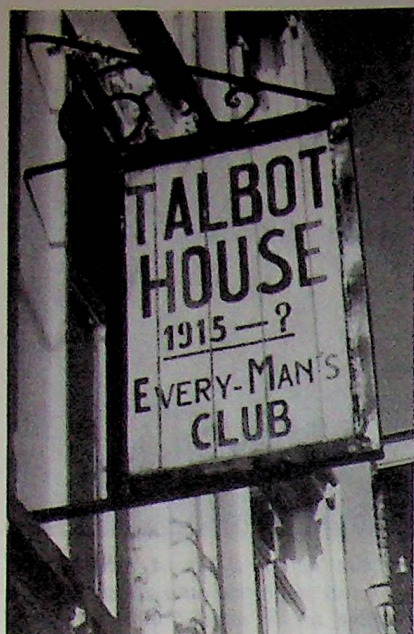
The local WRVS ladies provided refreshments and Toc H set up a second-hand book stall, making £64 and £56 respectively.

The enquiry 'when are you organising the next one?' was heard many times, and was a sure sign of success.

And briefly

... The ten members of Pocklington Women's Branch raised the impressive sum of £1,000 for a guide dog for the blind.

... The Cornish Times reports that 'Toc H takes OAPs to Looe. . .'. So what's new? It is good to hear that Burraton Branch's work with the elderly continues.



THE OLD HOUSE

Major decisions have to be taken soon about the future of Talbot House, Poperinge, and the part it will play in years to come. At Central Council, in early November, Councillors will debate the whole question in depth, and as a background to that debate, we print two new viewpoints on the way forward.

The Challenge facing us

Noel Cornick
A member of the Executive of
the Talbot House Association

Birthplaces are invariably places of fond memory, occasionally visited and always held dear. This is particularly so when the creature brought into the world has reached its threescore years and ten without showing too many signs of senility and having directly and indirectly affected the lives of thousands of people throughout the world. Such is the case with Toc H. It was in Talbot House, Poperinge that the seed of the Movement was planted 70 years ago, and whilst its branches have now spread far and wide, its roots remain firmly set in Belgian soil.

That Talbot House has survived 70 years at all is reason for great thanksgiving,

Troubled thoughts on Poperinge

Keith Rea
International Secretary

I count myself lucky as being one of those taking part in the last Communion in the Upper Room with Tubby. He was then over 80 and I vividly remember the length of time he spent on his knees supported by one of the standard candle holders, a feature then and now of the Chapel.

This fond recollection serves to illustrate the trouble I have in my thinking about the Old House. While the spirit of that occasion lives with me I have absolutely no feelings about that standard candle holder! So it is with the rest of the material with which the house is so liberally endowed; although as International Secretary I have some responsibility for Talbot House I am, in fact, a very poor guide to its contents. I suppose this stems from an opinion that the age of material things is not really important in itself and therefore ancient things are not worth preserving unless they have aesthetic value. Very little in Talbot House meets this criteria yet in the crazy markets of the world where 'old is gold' it is a very different story.

Of course others have very different views and I respect these, but why, I ask, do so few members now visit Poperinge? Do they too, have a reverence for the spirit which emanated, and still emanates from the Chapel yet feel that it is unrelated to the building and its contents?

I remember John Hull getting the Central Executive to talk about the spiritual centre of Toc H which he saw, at that

time, as being the Cuddesdon Chapel. We fairly quickly concluded that one's spiritual experience could not be fixed in time and place but could occur at any time. In the Upper Room, All Hallows or Cuddesdon maybe, but often in a local chapel or out on a job helping those in need.

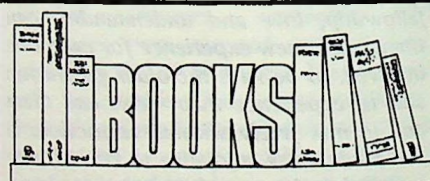
Certainly the spirit moves strongly in the Old House whenever or wherever friendship abides and Noel in his article speaks of the future in visionary terms. I too have had those dreams and perhaps, at times, have perceived an inching forward toward the Kingdom particularly because of the recent dedication and persistence of Charles and Ivy Swan. But contentment is the mother of complacency and we need to go forward with our thoughts based on the limitations and realities of the here and now which, in a movement which claims to be open, requires to be clearly stated. To use a further cliché, realities represent our starting blocks which we need to use in order to move forward. So perhaps the following opinions bring out some of the problems and challenges facing Talbot House.

It is perhaps unlikely that large sums of capital will be spent on the house, but even if the present mode of use is maintained a substantial subsidy will be needed from the Family Purse. Attempts to raise a large endowment by Tubby and others have failed. The key to this failure is a lack of will by the membership. We find that members from overseas are always keen to visit the house while nearer home few do so on a regular basis. Not that accommodating more members would contribute to balancing the books but in the spiritual context it is most important.

As to the building, one of the less costly

changes in vogue is to use the old toilet block, named the Slessorium, to house the books and memorabilia. While tourists could be charged and guided there, it would not greatly lessen wear and tear because the Upper Room is still, quite properly, the main attraction and that cannot be moved to the Slessorium or floated across the channel!

Now to deal with the problems of shared rooms, a modern accommodation block is needed allowing the restoration of the house and contents to its original state. This, plus the commercial exploitation of the Slessorium, could provide a financial solution, but the return on the huge capital outlay would be minimal so a substantial capital grant would have to come from Belgian sources for the museum aspect. The new accommodation block, if really needed, would have to be



'PRAYING THE KINGDOM'

Charles Elliott

In Toc H we are very conscious of the need for building and living in the Kingdom of God and this book will greatly help us to work our way into it more effectively. One must bear with the occasional apparent cynicism of the author, who has travelled widely among under-privileged people and is an able development economist. He gives some vivid and poignant instances of the present state of the world; its political state, its economics, nutrition and world health, armaments industry and racialism — a world in which we are all greatly troubled but one in which we must 'pray the Kingdom'.

given the dramatic events of the 20th century and the increasing burden which an ageing property creates. It is precisely because the Old House has successfully weathered the upheavals of recent years — and for this we owe a great deal to our Belgian friends — that we must now grasp the nettle of securing its continued existence for future generations.

Mozart's birthplace in Salzburg, Churchill's in Woodstock, Hardy's in Dorset and so many others have been preserved as museums and memorials to outstanding talent. Talbot House is more than merely an historical monument, however. Certainly the House and its contents are of enormous interest to the student of World War One, certainly it provides a lasting memory of the genius, inspiration and energy of our Founder, and certainly it is the shrine of our Movement — but it must continue to be more than that.

financed from the UK. A radical, costly and unlikely solution perhaps and the commercial aspect of the changes outlined would not have to be garish or chintzy.

The Belgian groups, now perhaps the main evidence of the spirit of the house, while active seem to lack ambition and refuse to 'come of age' maintaining their experimental Group status for a very long period. Thus attempts to encourage them to become the nucleus of an autonomous Belgian Toc H have so far failed. Perhaps the Association, the obvious and legal kernel of such a move, is seen to be too staid and hidebound to provide a lead for such active spirits.

Such are some of the prosaic problems facing Toc H and Talbot House Association at the present time and there

Thanks to local enthusiasm, Talbot House has become the home of two Toc H groups, the efforts of both of which are well known and highly regarded both in Belgium and in the UK. But the existence of a property abroad provides us with an opportunity for outreach, for development, for the promotion of greater understanding between people of different countries, classes and creeds. A glance at the Visitors Book in the entrance hall reveals the international nature of the clientele.

None of this can be done without money. Talbot House is an expensive resource. The fabric of the building requires constant and expensive maintenance, and there is an obvious need for full-time residential staff both to care for the House, to look after its many visitors and to see that its resources are used to the best possible effect. The complicated administrative structure of the House

are, of course, many more permutations. I must confess a doubt about the possibility of Poperinge remaining a focus for the spirit of our UK family in the future. The will for this is concentrated in a too small and decreasing coterie of enthusiasts. On that evidence one must hope that the house is increasingly used by Belgian members who must also be more involved than at present in really managing the affairs of the house. I hope I am wrong about our UK participation but the level of support from membership will determine whether Talbot House has an inspirational future for Toc H members here or is destined to be part of our Archives — a Museum. There are many valid reasons for supporting Talbot House, but the amount of resources used must surely depend on the quality of spiritual outreach rather than the material of the house.

does not make any easier the task of achieving economy and efficiency in running it. The House is not, in fact, owned by Toc H, but by the Talbot House Association which is directly responsible for its administration, but which relies on the parent Movement for considerable financial assistance. It would without doubt make life easier, not least from a legal point of view, if this involved bureaucracy could be streamlined. Those charged with responsibility for Talbot House must give this serious consideration. There is then a strong case for major capital investment in the property to improve the facilities in the Garden House and to develop the largely neglected Slessorium, both of which projects would significantly enhance the potential of the premises. More visitors could be accommodated, both on a casual and a residential basis, and opportunities for pursuing the aims of Toc H on foreign soil would be increased.

That being said, it is vitally important that nothing should be done to harm the ethos or atmosphere of the Old House. It means too much and is too dear to the hearts of too many of us — and not only those of riper years either — to be allowed to develop into either an austere and soulless museum or a garish and chintzy tea-shop. We must be clear that Talbot House, Poperinge, is never likely to pay its own way. Nevertheless, we should all commit ourselves now, in the full knowledge and acceptance of the onerous nature of that commitment, to securing its future as a place of pilgrimage, a source of mental and spiritual refreshment, a dynamic centre for the pursuit of international understanding and a place where the standards and patterns of behaviour which are embodied in Toc H can flourish and prosper.

It is in this aspect of our situation that the author commends a meditational method for our prayer. He takes imaginative situations with a Biblical background asking us to think ourselves into the circumstances of the people instanced. This is done with a background of a consciousness of the real world of suffering, injustice, poverty and pain. The feelings of guilt and powerlessness which accompany a sober facing of our contemporary situation are squarely faced so we inevitably find ourselves involved in politics and even, perhaps, with peacemakers rather than peacekeepers.

The Kingdom is to be lived, writes the author in his final chapter, and it is given to those who try to live it. That emphasises the essential element in the nature of the Kingdom as announced and lived by Jesus, namely its presentness and the urgency of the necessity for the eternal 'now'. Too often the idea of the coming of the Kingdom leads us to look

to the future, whereas we exist to express by work in prayer the presentness of God's Kingdom in the circumstances of the real world of 1985. *'We shall never know what the Kingdom will be until it is here'* writes Charles Elliott — but it is here. Consequently we live not in a fallen world but in God's world, a world where the Kingdom is in process of being made real in so far as our trust, energy and vision respond and measure up to the transforming dynamism of God.

This will mean identifying with the suffering servants of our generation and we need to be in a group, a 'mixed' group, to get the full benefit from the thinking behind this original way of Praying the Kingdom. There must be a praying through as well as an acting out of the Kingdom.

David Worth

'Praying the Kingdom' published by Darton, Longman & Todd, price £3.50.

'CHRISTMAS WISHES'

Phil Mason has compiled some Christmas thoughts into a small booklet, which comes complete with envelope at the modest price of 50p. This is a delightful keepsake, more lasting than the usual card, having messages for each day 25 to 31 December.

Here we find, as in all Phil Mason's booklets, stories of simple faith and love in ordinary men and women.

'If each one of us would take some of the loving kindness we share at Christmas into every day of the year, what a happier place this world would be.'

Eileen Clark

'Christmas Wishes' published by and available from Norheimsund Books & Cards, 1 Whitney Road, Burton Latimer, Kettering, Northants NN15 5SL.

Disinvestment in South

The whole issue of Sanctions and Disinvestment is very much in the news at present. Opinions differ widely and this is true in Toc H as well. We have some members who belong to formal 'Anti-apartheid' organisations, we have others who disagree profoundly and many more who are struggling to Think Fairly about the whole issue.

The article we print here is composed of two extracts from a longer article written by Alan Paton, one of the great figures of Toc H South Africa, for a magazine *Leadership SA*, of Johannesburg.

Alan has been an author of international fame since the publication of *'Cry the beloved country'*.

We hope to carry a reply to this article in our December issue, so correspondents are invited to read that before submitting their views.

There is only one firm statement that I can make on Disinvestment — I will have nothing to do with it whatsoever. I will not by any written or spoken word of mine give it any support whatsoever.

There are obviously two sides to this question. On the one side are the South African industrialists, the capitalists, very big money and very small money, the overwhelming majority of white South Africans, and a substantial majority of black South Africans. On the other side are some — by no means all — highly educated and sophisticated blacks, and a very small minority of white South Africans, and a very considerable number of righteous and self-righteous people of the West, who entertain the mistaken opinion that the weakening of the South African economy will bring freedom and happiness to the suffering and oppressed people of our country.

I find myself uncompromisingly on the side of the industrialist capitalists, big money (almost entirely white), small money (almost entirely black), and the overwhelmingly white majority and the considerable black majority. I belong therefore to a very mixed constituency. I am not very interested in money though I would not like to be without it. I am not writing this article for money, though I

shall be paid for it. I am writing it for a simple — and to some perhaps a naive — reason. I am writing it because I think I ought to. I would much rather be writing something else.

And for whom is it being written? Primarily for the righteous people of the West. Not for the self-righteous, because I do not think I have the ability to persuade self-righteous people that they are wrong or misguided. I am writing for those people in the West who are concerned to see a more just order in South Africa, and who are concerned to know what they can do about it. I am not writing for any person who has ulterior aims of his or her own, or who is trying to further some personal cause, or who is trying to win the support of black American voters.

Why am I totally opposed to Disinvestment? It is primarily for a moral reason. I am a Christian, and, I might add, not a very good one, a confession that has often been made by much better Christians than I.

It is my firm belief that the people who will pay most grievously for Disinvestment will be the black workers of South Africa. I take very seriously the teachings of the gospels. I take very seriously the parables of the giving of drink to the thirsty and the giving of food to the hungry. It seems to me that Jesus attached supreme and indeed sacred significance to such actions. Therefore I will not help to cause any such suffering to any black person.

I am told that this is a simplistic understanding of the teachings of the gospels. Then let it be so. That is the way I choose to understand them.

I am also told that I am ignoring the views of those black South Africans who support Disinvestment. Most of these black South Africans will not be the ones to suffer hunger and thirst. Many of them are sophisticated, highly educated, safely placed. I also know sophisticated and highly educated black men and women who will have nothing to do with Disinvestment. I choose to associate myself with them.

I am told that though I believe my views to be moral, they are in fact immoral, because I will not take the side of those black people who want Disinvestment. This is a new interpretation of morality to me, that I ought to adopt certain views because some influential black people

hold them. I do not hold these views because they are acceptable — or not acceptable — to either black people or white people. I do not consider that the welfare of black people or the welfare of white people are the supreme considerations. The supreme consideration to me is the welfare of my country, and therefore the welfare of all its people.

There is an often heard declaration: 'We do not mind suffering. We are used to suffering'. But this again is often the declaration of those who will suffer least.

To put it briefly, my conscience would not allow me to support Disinvestment. But I must ask myself — and my readers who are concerned to do what is right — how long must this suffering go on before the desired end is achieved? A month? Two months? A year? Five or ten years perhaps?

No one can fully answer this question, though one can say at once that Disinvestment will take time to bite deep. South Africa's business community will muster every resource to save the economy from destruction. That they have their own interests to consider is of course to be taken for granted. That is the kind of economic world in which we live, and it is the kind of economic world that is to be found throughout the West. It is supposed to have some kind of correlation with freedom and with the encouragement of initiative, and with the rule of law. The alternative to it is the world of the centralised economy, which not only controls enterprise, but ends up by controlling literature, the arts, the press, the rights of free assembly and free expression, and almost everything else. Both of these worlds have their credits and their debits. I choose the world of the free economy.

I have no doubt that some supporters of Disinvestment hope that it will not only cause such severe damage to the economy, but will also increase this endemic unrest to such an extent that armed revolution will take place, and that the present government will be overthrown by force of arms.

In the first place let me say that the black people of South Africa, even if they so desired, could not unaided wage a successful revolution.

Now who is likely to come to their aid? In the present state of West-East relations, and that means to a large

extent, USA-USSR relations, it is hard to see any answer to this question. Of course it *could* happen, but only as a result of the greatest political miracle of our century. It *could* happen if a joint USA-USSR task force said to the South African Government 'abolish apartheid immediately, and grant a universal franchise to all your peoples, or we will enter and utterly destroy your military power.' This is not likely to happen.

Suppose that a deep-biting investment campaign were followed by more far-reaching sanctions, and suppose that South Africa were completely isolated from the world. Suppose that the West succeeded in thus creating an economic and political vacuum in the south of the continent. I have no doubt that the USSR would embark on another African adventure. The West should be warned that its isolation campaign could have disastrous consequences for itself.

I have a last word to say to those fanatical divestors who think they can bring the South African government 'to its knees'. They will not succeed. The Afrikaner Nationalists may at times behave like fools, but they do not behave like cowards.

But more importantly still, if the self-righteous bring our government 'to its knees', they will have to bring the whole country to its knees as well. If the Afrikaner Nationalists are ever brought to their knees, it will have to be by the gun. And if they are brought to their knees, agriculture, industry, railways, ports, will all be brought to their knees as well. We will become one of the begging nations of the world, and the West having broken us, will have to come and feed us. Russia will give us guns, America will have to give us food.

I do not argue with black, or indeed white, South Africans who advocate Disinvestment. One cannot argue with passion.

Just as I am coming to the end of this article I receive my copy of the South African Anglican newspaper SEEK. It contains an 'Open Statement of South Africa' by the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in America, the Rt Rev John M Allin. I am going to quote some of his words.

After expressing the grief of the Church over recent events in South Africa, Bishop Allin said: 'Real reform must go

From the Central Executive Committee meeting 6/8 September

1. What is Toc H?

That is a question asked innumerable times every year. To help in giving a good answer, Toc H has, over the years, published many definitions and descriptions — some produced centrally, others locally.

At its meeting, the CEC decided that there was the need for some sort of general oversight of what is printed as a definition of Toc H. This is not to produce a dull uniformity, or stifle creative redefinitions, but to ensure that what is published about Toc H is in line with what the Movement is, and stands for.

A small group, of which the Editor is the convenor and which includes a wide range of age and Toc H experience, has been set up to keep an eye on new definitions. It will also seek to produce new ones itself when necessary. So, in future, any person or group wishing to publish a new definition of Toc H, is requested to submit it to the group, through the Editor, at Toc H Headquarters.

This is not censorship! It is a responsible attempt to ensure we do not mislead enquirers, by publishing statements that are incorrect, or which unduly emphasize a particular part of Toc H, and thus undervalue other aspects.

2. Price Rise for Point Three

Having held the price of Point Three at 10p per copy for ten years, the CEC reluctantly decided that there should be an increase as from April 1986. From that date, individual copies will cost 20p, but an annual subscription will be just £2 (an annual rise of just 80p which does not seem excessive).

This increase is due, naturally, to rising expenses of paper, design and printing. However, for the new price we are also planning to increase the paper quality, and we hope readers will appreciate this.

Annual subscriptions which are still current at 1 April will continue at the old price until expiry but all new subscriptions taken out after 1 April will be at the new price.

Postage. Individual mailing of Point Three costs about £1.20 per person per annum. We are deeply grateful to the many kind individuals and Branches who have been making voluntary donations to postal costs — this cut the post bill by about £1,000 last year. We do hope, and ask, that you will continue to give generously towards these costs. Point Three and its postage will still be heavily subsidised by the Movement, and we wish to keep that subsidy as low as possible.

forward in South Africa. The years of oppression must be redeemed. South Africa must be healed and become a land of hope and justice for all her sons and daughters.

'As Christians, we cannot condone or participate in actions that will bring any nation into full-scale civil war. We cannot abandon our fellow human beings by walking away from them or condemning them to international isolation...

'We must continue to help our government realise that the best and most effective engagement in South Africa is unofficial and personal, reflected in constant contact, in commerce, in intellectual and cultural exchange.

'It is the creative engagement of constant argument. We expect our government to argue actively, forcefully and publicly for the value of the ideals and principles upon which our nation was founded.'

I cannot close with wiser words than those. As I read them I am inevitably reminded of the woman to whom Jesus said: 'neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more'. Legend says of her that she became a holy woman. Well I can't promise that. But there is one thing that I can promise. If the nations of the West condemn us, they will only hinder the process of our emancipation from the bondage of our history. They must stay with us, rebuke us, encourage us, and the chances are that we shall do better.

Personality Point

The following members were registered during July/August/September:

Mrs Elsie S Oldfield (Aigburth W), Miss Heather Lawson, Peter Sturgess (Birmingham District), John P Gates (Bournemouth & Christchurch J), Mrs Edna M Masters (Broadwater W), Mrs Flora E De Blaquiére (Bromborough W), Mrs Valerie Bashford (Denton J), Mrs Olive G Kelly, Miss Kathleen A Rowley (Fulham W), David Clark (High Brooms M), Dick Bathgate (Jedburgh M), James Culshaw, Mrs Patricia Culshaw (Leigh J), Stephen M Boulton, Henry I Cooper, Mrs Madeline Galbraith, Thomas Galbraith, Miss Tracey Galbraith, Mrs Lucille M Kennedy, Andrew Plater, Anthony Warner, Mrs Brenda Warner, (Marsh Farm (Luton) J Grp), Harold G

Long (Melton Mowbray M), Mrs Jean Long (Melton Mowbray W), Mrs Mary S Clinton (Much Wenlock J), Joseph Beck, Norman Templeton (Newcastle West J Grp), Mrs Dinah Walters, Michael A Walters (Portsmouth J Grp), Mrs Jean Dickens (Rushden Pytchley W), Mrs Joyce M Denton (Rushden Royal W), The Revd Canon Harold G Lovell (SE & West Herts District), Ronald N Franklin, Karl D Knight (Thanet District), David Wade (Wellingborough M), Walter H Boulter (Wigmore & Rainham M), Miss Mandi Nickols (Wimborne Tiggers J Grp).

A warm welcome to 37 new members

Congratulations!

to Sheila and Paul Cullip (of Cuddesdon House) on the birth of a daughter on 11 September.

to Officer Ivor Rickard of Aylesbury Youth Custody Service, who is responsible for producing our Braille copies of Point Three in Aylesbury Prison, who has recently received the David Scott Blackhall award for this year. This is an annual award presented to the person considered to have given outstanding service to the blind. David Scott Blackhall used to be a presenter of BBC's 'In Touch' and when he died five years ago this award was set up in his memory.

A busy summer in Uckfield

Uckfield (M) Branch have had a busy summer. They set up a post-coding service for bicycles and one evening coded 85 bicycles at Rhodes Park School. *'They were queueing up when we started'* said Chairman Hugh Chisholm, *'We used three lots of dies, and each cycle also had a badge stating it was coded'*. Post-coding was introduced recently by Sussex police to help trace stolen bikes.

A month later the Branch turned up in force at Grants Hill House, divided into flats for the elderly. They erected a greenhouse for the use of the residents, and the Warden, Mrs Anne Davies, expressed thanks on behalf of the residents.

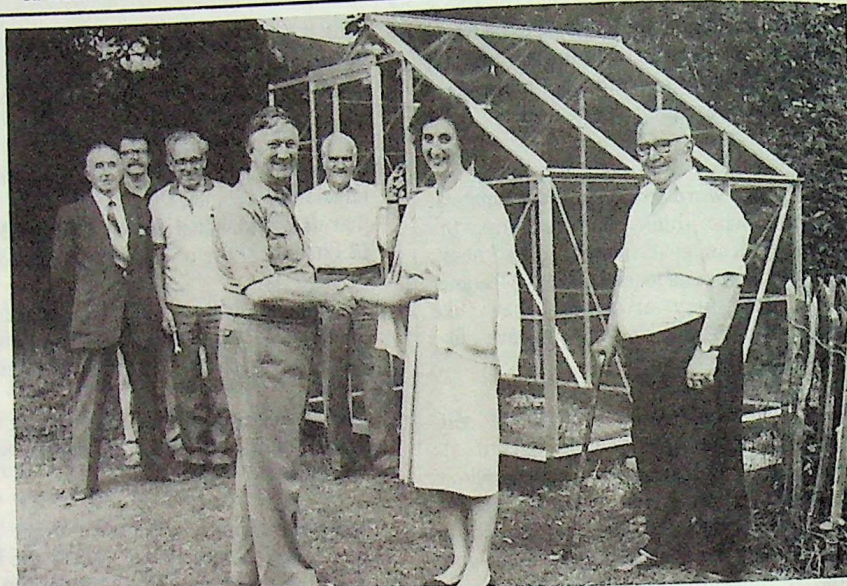
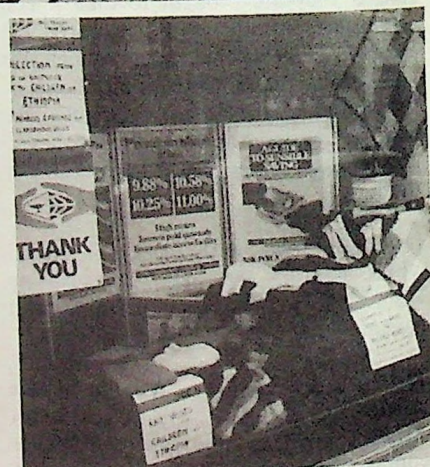


Photo: Kent and Sussex Courier

Forthcoming Events

- | | | | |
|----------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| November | 2/3 | Central Council Meeting, Swanwick, Derbyshire | |
| | 7 | 'Alternatives' Day Conference, Cuddesdon House | Open |
| | 22 | Cardiff Centre — Open Day | Open |
| | 22/24 | Drop-in Weekend Project: Dunstable Scrub Clearance | Open |
| | 29 | Official Opening of Toc H, 38 Newark Street, London | |
| | 30 | Open Day at Toc H, 38 Newark Street, London | Open |
| | 30 | Scottish Conference, Dunblane | |
| December | 6/8 | CEC Residential Weekend Alison House | |
| | 11/12 | World Chain of Light — commencing Maryborough, Queensland, Australia, and to be observed at 9pm, local time | |
| | 14 | North West and North Wales Regional Council | |
| | 14 | Tubby Clayton Centenary Service, followed by Carol Service, All Hallows Church, London. Details and tickets from Miss C M Pring, 39 Princes Plain, Bromley, Kent BR2 8LH | |
| | | | Open |
| January | 18 | SW Regional Executive, Wellington | |
| | 25 | W Mids and S Wales Regional Council, Gloucester | |

Enquiries concerning 'Open' events may be sent to the Editor who will forward them to the local organiser.



Llandrindod Wells Branch regularly visit a local Old People's Home. One 85 year old resident, Emily Jones, knits regularly and gave the Branch a huge pile of garments, blankets etc for Ethiopian children. The Branch displayed these in a local shop window as their way of saying 'thank you' to her.

We will Remember...

We regret to announce the death of the following members:

In May

Gwenneth E M Pullin (Wallasey)

In July

James P Bird (Cheltenham), Isabel J Cameron (Edinburgh Seventy Five), Alfred S Gill (Wortley-de-Leeds), Thomas J Larke (Sprowston), Dudley G Rendle (Calstock), Will Shuttleworth (St Annes), Grace Sadd (Tunbridge Wells)

In August

Arthur L M Bainton (Constable District), Winifred E Cossins (Newport IOW), Wilfrid 'Bill' Davies (Cam District), Norman E England (West Somerset District), Joyce Evans (RHHI), Revd Ernest R Newman (Springfields District), Fred Robinson (St Annes)

In September

James E Hamilton (Pant)
Percival J Seymour (Gloucester)

Bill Barnes tells us that 'Lionel Birkett, a member of Toc H Middlesbrough, was a man of many interests. He was an outstanding Branch Pilot and gave benign but strong leadership.

Owing to the long illness of his wife he could attend only occasional Branch meetings. His last visit was made in order to initiate Bob Dodsworth into membership. It was a night touched with 'magic' or was the Holy Spirit present? Thirty six hours later Lionel was found dead in his bed and we had lost a leader, a member and a friend'.

Leslie Mallett tells us that Geoffrey Mayes joined the Movement in the early 1930s and was an active member until he moved away. However, he kept his interest alive as a Builder and some three years ago, although in failing health, renewed his acquaintance with the Branch and occasionally attended meetings...

Rudolf Loewy writes that 'Eric Watkin joined Toc H in the Services during the War and afterwards was a member of Wembley Branch. He held most Branch offices at one time or another until the Branch closed, when he joined the District Branch and continues his unfailing support of Toc H events and activities.'

Herbert Fell writes that George Blackford had been a member for 15 years, 14 years as a jobmaster, and that included installing some 200 flashing lights in the Ashford Area...

... He had two great qualities, his cheerfulness and his willingness to help others, and we give thanks to God for 15 years of loyal service.'

Editor's Note:

Due to pressure of space, the Editor usually has to reduce the length of tributes sent in - and will continue to do so unless the author specifically requests 'All or nothing'!

Maurice Travis tells us that Frank Taylor, who died in June, was a founder member of Rochdale Branch, and a member for over 50 years. 'A staunch Anglican, he was nevertheless keenly interested in anything that helped to bring the various churches together. His interesting and thought-provoking talks at Branch meetings will be missed. His passing is a great loss to Toc H in Rochdale.'

Ruby Relf writes 'Grace Sadd, a much loved member of Tunbridge Wells Women's Branch for very many years, was always courageous and cheerful even though in recent years she had much sorrow and suffered a great deal. She was always working and caring for others in various spheres as well as in Toc H and will be remembered with affection by all who had the privilege of knowing her'.

Les Bainton was a member of Toc H for 62 years. In 1923 he was a founder member of the Reading Branch, moving to Uxbridge in the early 1930s, and helped to start Drayton and Yiewsley Branch. In 1946 he moved to Ipswich and was with the Branch for nearly 20 years. When he moved to Trimley he became a member of the Constable District until his death. His talent as a pianist came in very useful when the Ipswich Branch entertained the household and at other functions.

Wilfrid ('Bill') Davies, was a member for 64 years until his recent death at the age of 88. He kept the membership records for 32 years at our Francis Street, Victoria, Headquarters and was a quiet and diligent servant of Toc H.

We give thanks for their lives



This photograph, sent to us by Dr Irwin Friedman of the Valley Trust, illustrates the grievous need for better medical attention at Botha's Hill. This child, suffering from kwashiorkor, has died since the photograph was taken. The Silindokhule Maternal and Child Care Unit, and the Community Health Workers (both covered in our August issue) have as one of their fundamental goals the teaching of mothers to prevent this sort of tragedy.



Seven sponsored walkers from the Anglia Building Society in Northampton raised £400 for Toc H holidays for the handicapped in the East Midlands.

Photo: Northampton Chronicle & Echo

Open Forum

The Challenge from Durham

The observations and thoughts in the article about 'A Challenge from Durham' by Ken Prideaux-Brune have touched me on a great many levels.

Belonging to a small Branch here in Much Wenlock, I find it somewhat easier to express my thoughts to the other members as our meetings are more intimate. We are fortunate to have a very enthusiastic Chairman, Connie Tate, who encouraged me to write to you myself, secretly hoping for a guiding thought from Ken Prideaux-Brune.

It is the search for meaning of the deeper questions in the Christian religion that has kept me away from the Church. I also found, like Ken, that if a person shares doubts, not only do they become closer to God, but make you realise you are not alone in having difficulty finding the 'real faith' or what I would like to call 'completely abandoned, found belief' intuitive and poetic. How much peace one could find in the hope, or even certainty, that death is not the end. I have, like many others no doubt, always searched for the truth of the mysteries of our existence since childhood. Often I am sure that God has guided me to what my life has become now. I want to find the purpose. Because it is now that I need Him most. My husband has Alzheimer's Disease and the need for spiritual strength is very profound. As Ken says *'The flickering images of the transcendent, or reflections in moving water'* for me I wish should become a sea of tranquillity and peace from which to draw strength to uplift the spirit.

Inge Davis
Much Wenlock

Ken Prideaux-Brune's article on The Challenge from Durham (July issue) was for me sad reading.

It was brave of him to share with readers the difficulties he had experienced in developing his religious understanding. He mentions how reading Bishop John Robinson's book 'Honest to God' some years ago, had helped him; also how for him 'the Bishop of Durham's honest sharing of his views is positive and helpful.'

I have read how many people have been helped by Bishop Jenkins in this way and we can be glad of that. Most people have religious doubts and difficulties, some more than others.

I can say that in his article Ken has explained to me, better than anyone else, what the Bishop of Durham is 'getting at' in his radical teaching.

However, when I consider the debt of gratitude we owe to Ken for all he had done for Toc H over the years (not least as Director) I very much regret that I disagree with him about the Durham affair.

Ken and others have found the Bishop of Durham's view positive and helpful, whereas I and others do not find them so at all, but the very opposite.

For those who, like me, are puzzled, I would like to recommend four books. First and most helpful *'Easter in Durham'*, very fairlymindedly written by Murray J Harris, Warden, Tyndale House, Cambridge, with a splendid preface by the Bishop of London — price 85p (Paternoster Press Ltd, Exeter EX2 4JW).

Second — *'Where Did Jesus Go?'* by David Holloway, Vicar, Jesmond Parish Church, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Marshall's Paperbacks, Basingstoke — price £3.95).

Third — *'Making Sense of the Durham Affair'* by James Rushton, Vicar of St James, Carlisle (Churchman Publishing of Worthing).

Fourth — *'Easter Enigma'* by John Wenham (Paternoster Press, Exeter) — price £2.95.

Geoffrey Kestell-Cornish
Barnstaple

Checks and Balances

I wholeheartedly agree with John Morgan's letter (June issue), the ordinary member on the CEC is manipulated. Ted Tunnadine's article on page six made me smile; he states we need some radicals. I'm regarded as a stirrer because some of my thinking is radical. I suggested capitation fees — WOW! — what a furore that caused, yet capitation fees were alright from 1922 to 1945. I put forward a plan to reorganise Toc H on an economical basis. HQ thought my plan was not possible yet three months later it was to some degree carried out. I argued about this new housing scheme of Eddie Godfrey's but HQ, being HQ, think they know best and do not want the views of radicals like myself.

What of the 'Action for the 70s', 'Strategy for the 70s', and the Methods Report No 246? What did these fulfil or produce? Were these too radical?

To quote Prince Philip, 'Get your finger out; get down to modern times, modern thinking, today — 1915 thinking is no good in 1985.'

Throw your bricks. I have my armour on and shield at the ready.

Doug Sobey
Gloucester

Thinking Fairly

Is South Africa wholly bad as so often portrayed in the news media and on television?

Much of the good, and indeed the bad, aspects of South African affairs are regularly featured in the SA Digest which comments on current developments and includes extracts from our media reporting from the point of view of all political and national persuasions.

If you would like regular copies of the Digest, which is free, please write to me at Toc H Headquarters, PO Box 3624, Johannesburg 2000, and I will arrange this.

Alec Bullivant
Johannesburg

(Alec Bullivant is shortly to retire as Hon Administrator of Toc H South Africa. — Ed)

'A Pensioner's Prayer Book'

In April 1982 Eileen Clark reviewed 'A Pensioner's Prayer Book' compiled by Harold Speed, one of our members.

Her concluding paragraph indicated that she thought the price high at £2.95. Harold advises me that the price has been reduced to £1 plus 18p postage from the publishers John Paul, The Preacher's Press, Charlton House, Hunslet Road, Leeds LS10 1JW, or from religious booksellers.

Bob Brown
Bebington

Toc H in Argentina

It was heartwarming to read Luella Grant's letter from Argentina. How much closer it brings us together. Our Women's Branch is much the same with about 11 members, ages ranging from 74-88. We can't do all we used to do. We send money to Family Purse, help projects, District, a few local charities and Peter East. We knit lots of blankets and jumpers for children in Africa etc. All our members enjoy meeting together. Could we please have more news from overseas from individual Branches? At our Kent Day Gilbert Francis told us of the work done in Germany by Toc H. The majority of the 150 there had no idea so much was being done in the name of Toc H. Thank you Luella for your letter and the map. It helps us to know where you are. Best wishes to you and your Branch for the future.

Ethel Kime
Dover

Opinions expressed in these columns (including any editorial comment) are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement. We reserve the right to edit letters. Only letters carrying the correspondent's full name and address will be considered for publication.

Spectacles Again

May I thank all Toc H members for their continued support. We manage to get away an average of 4,000 pairs of spectacles a month to Zambia.

If any Toc H member has broken watches, I'll be glad of them. We repair and sell them. It helps our funds, as we receive no public funding.

Again many thanks for your great support.

Albert Fremlin-Bailey
Church Crookham

Note: Please send any spectacles or watches direct to Mr A Fremlin-Bailey, British and Overseas Optical Missions, 'Hinstock', 65b Sandy Lane, Church Crookham, Hants GU13 0DA and not to Toc H HQ.

— Ed

Top Salaries

Can the Movement really afford to employ two people at salaries of £12,000?

Now that both posts of Director and General Secretary are being advertised concurrently, as I have just noticed in July's *Point Three*, is it time to consider an amalgamation of the two roles? An increase in the salary of our Director commensurate with extra responsibilities would be offset by the employment of one or maybe two secretarial staff at less than half the salary.

This not only improves the unemployment situation, and indirectly therefore the nation's economy, but also makes economic sense from the Movement's point of view. Dividing the General Secretary's duties should increase productivity and efficiency, provided all output comes under the direction of the top individual.

Fewer liaison meetings between two top people means more communication from the top to the lower echelons of Toc H, and although I accept that one person can attend fewer meetings than two, another benefit of combining the two jobs would be a reduction in travelling expenditure.

Bedford and Kempston Branches recently discussed our views of the Director's role and the qualities required including strong leadership, interpretation of the Movement's philosophy and public relations skill. Surely the first of these would be undermined by having two people at the top?

Richard Heyes
Bedford

'Feel the width'

Having read Ronald Cottingham's article in the August *Point Three*, I am truly saddened that a Toc H Padre should imply that false gods such as an 'old banger' 'money' 'sex' 'work' 'football team' or 'pop group' are acceptable within the Movement as applying to Point Four of the Compass.

I would have thought that the Founders of the Toc H organisation, being dedicated Christians, would have desperately tried to direct men away from false gods but lead them to the one true God.

The first of the ten commandments is still relevant.

Cliff Martin
Rushden

A project thank-you

I have just returned from my first Toc H project. The week was spent visiting Old People's Homes, child minding, and generally helping the community and promoting Toc H. I would like to say thank you to Toc H, and a special thank you to Donna Gibbs and Neville Wilkinson, for such an exciting time during which they, six volunteers and a driver *should* have been travelling and sleeping in the Plus Bus!

The project was organised with a tight schedule which nearly didn't materialise due to the breakdown of the bus, which never arrived! Such a potentially damaging blow was dealt with admirably by all concerned and alternative transport and accommodation were duly arranged.

And, as if no bus was not enough, one of the two cars broke down! Again, the problem was dealt with swiftly and

effectively such that all planned engagements were carried out.

Everyone on the project had a good time, experiencing the Christian reality of genuine friendship and warmth. At least two first time volunteers are going on other projects this season, with other members likely to follow suit, and this aim is clearly what Toc H projects should be about.

I would like to wish all those concerned with Toc H good luck in all your future ventures. Thank you again and God Bless.

Christine Gray
Farnborough

Greenham Common

I can only assume from John Randell's letter (July issue) that he believes that the way of non-violence will not be successful if applied by a nation state, and that nations are wise to pile up more and more arms. But 'living by the sword' today means being ready and willing to kill and maim indiscriminately, and to continually divert resources from the world's poor and starving.

In nuclear tests animals up to 40 miles from ground zero have been permanently blinded. Can that horrendous kind of weapon, or a weapon such as napalm, or nerve gas, ever be justified? Of course not. Does J R consider the present world nuclear arsenal, which increases daily and which is equivalent to one million Hiroshima's, to be 'adequate'? If he wants 'a sensible view of an adequate defence policy' he can find it in his New Testament. The Sermon on the Mount is still relevant.

John Perkins
Oxford



Strawberries for the Mayor and Mayoress at Thurrock Toc H's Strawberry Fair, which raised over £130 towards the running costs of the two Toc H ambulances.

Photo: Thurrock Gazette

Bordon Letter

Winnie Nelson

In 1956 a few Toc H members of various denominations met for a weekend retreat at Bordon in Hampshire. Their concern that Toc H members should be encouraged to reflect deeply on the work they do within Toc H led, among other things, to the production of a regular quarterly 'Bordon Letter' which continues to this day.

The Salvation Army, two points from the Toc H Compass, and two parables — how are they all tied up together? It all happened while listening to the Salvation Army's Service of Thanksgiving from St Paul's Cathedral on the occasion of the celebrations to mark their 100 years of social service, and the Archbishop of Canterbury's fine address.

We are all familiar with the work of the Salvation Army and the parable of the Good Samaritan, perhaps a little too familiar with the latter and tend to skip it over with 'Oh yes, I know that one backwards' — but do we? Do we sometimes pay too scant attention to Jesus's remark right at the end of the story (the sting in the tail if you like) to 'go and do likewise'?

We are all familiar with the aims of Toc H and its compass and the two points to 'Build Bravely' and 'Witness Humbly', but the voice is still saying 'go and do this'.

The second parable is one which may not be quite so familiar as the Good Samaritan, but is of equal importance, viz, the three men who were each given talents to look after. Again those words ring out 'go and do likewise'.

The Salvation Army we could call the man with five talents, and I don't think anyone would dare to say that they have failed to put their talents to the best use and increased them a hundredfold. The Toc H Movement we could call the man with two talents, and I am sure that its talents, too, have been and are being well used and faithfully increased. But what of the man with the one talent? I sincerely hope that those of us in Toc H who have only been endowed with one talent don't do as the man in the parable did. But, with all honesty, should we not examine ourselves to find out if the 'talent' (or 'gift') we have been given by God to look after is being used in the fullest possible way. Do we try to listen to what God is asking us to do with that talent? Do we not all say at times 'I can't'? Are we all at sometime or other too busy doing what we *think* God wants us to do instead of, by prayer, finding out exactly *what* he wants us to do? Be assured God never asks us to do what is beyond our capabilities. Yes, he very often stretches us, but never beyond breaking point if we look to him for strength and guidance to do what he is asking us to do. It is perfectly true what Jesus said 'Lo, I am

with you always' and no promise made by him has ever been broken and never will be.

The Salvation Army and Toc H are each striving to use the talents God has given them to feed the hungry, refresh the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the poor, visit and care for the sick, the elderly, the young (and those in the middle too!), those in prison, and to teach the Good News. It is also a God given gift to be able to just sit and listen to someone else outpouring their joys and sorrows, doubts and troubles (the Samaritans are excellent examples of this) — all these are gifts which can give refreshment to mind, body and soul, not only to the receiver but also to the giver. The list of talents God gives us and asks us to use is endless; the gift of being able to bring laughter to others, the gift to turn a few notes into a delightful melody, the gift of making music and song, the gift to turn paints, crayons, pens, pencils, pottery and wood into beautiful pictures and objects, to turn a pocket handkerchief of a wilderness into a lovely garden, to turn a few flowers and leaves into a beautiful picture, all to gladden someone's heart. The list goes on, and on.

Don't let us be discouraged and think 'What's the use of bothering? I have only been given one talent'. Let us look on it as a precious gift from God and ask him to guide us to use it to the best of our ability for him. I am sure we shall all be surprised at the result.

Let me finish with a story of an old monk in a Monastery who sang in the choir. He was getting old and feeble and his voice became more and more cracked and tremulous. In the end, the other monks asked for him to be taken out of the choir as his voice was spoiling their beautiful singing. Some time after he had been asked to leave an angel appeared to the Abbot and asked what had happened to the lovely singing as it was no longer heard. The Abbot replied that they still had the choir and the singing was more beautiful than ever, to which the angel replied, 'What choir? There was only one voice that reached the throne of God, that of an old monk who sang from his heart'. How different God's judgment is to man's. So don't let us lose heart even if our efforts grow weak and feeble. If the effort to use our talent comes from the heart, it will always be acceptable to God.

'I Can Manage!'

John Kilburn

That title, complete with exclamation mark, is a catch-phrase in our family. For nearly 20 years we've heard it over and over again from our youngest member. Those of you who read 'Homo Amans' will know who I'm writing about, but for those who missed it our 'baby' (and wouldn't I catch it if she saw herself so described!) is Mandy, now 21 and a woman who was born with Down's Syndrome — which used to be called 'mongolism'.

Mandy is very independent. Not fiercely so, two words which often seem to be linked, but with a quiet and expectant determination which quickly teaches those around her that when she wants help she'll ask for it — and that won't be very often. Instead, she will devise her own way of doing things, which might, to the arrogant and impatient, seem inefficient or slow, but in the doing and the succeeding give her much more satisfaction than being 'smothered by care' ever could.

Let me give you a couple of examples. When she was much younger she took quite a time to get through her meals. Some of her friends on school dinners used to say that she was the only pupil who was on both 'sittings', because she would eat her first course on one sitting and her pudding on the other. At home this could sometimes be a trial, so often parents and brothers would finish their meal and leave her to it. On one occasion she had a big lunch which started with soup, went on to meat and veg, and finished with apple pie. The rest of us finished while she was still on the first course, so mum put her meat plate and her pudding dish on the table and carried on with other things.

When the soup had finally disappeared, Mandy looked round for her meat. This had been placed nearby, where her brother, now long departed, had been sitting. Did she reach across to get it? Not a bit of it. She solemnly got down from her chair, went round to his place and 'sat up' again. What's more, she did exactly the same thing again when she wanted her pie. Well — it worked didn't it? And she didn't spill a drop of gravy or custard either, did she? Nor did she ask mum or me to pass the plate to her. Good for her!

Years later (last month in fact) we went

to a wedding. Now one of Mandy's proudest possessions is one of those cameras which develops the picture almost straight away – you don't have to wait till the film's finished, then mess about going to the chemist and waiting another week. Such an instant product has her whole-hearted approval. So when we all lined up in the sunshine after the service Mandy was there, snapping away. Proudly she handed to the happy bride and groom their first wedding photograph – long before the professional had got his head under the cloth (there's a moral there perhaps). What's interesting, though, is how Mandy buys the film. It costs £6.69 from Dixon's, a complicated amount. But Mandy doesn't have any truck with 50p pieces, those silly little 20's or copper twos and ones. Not her. She was delighted when the £1 coin came out. Now all she ever does is change her money up whenever she can into 'whole pounds' and then hand coins over till the shop assistant says enough. It works well, especially as arithmetic never was her strong point. Aha, you say, but she could be short-changed! Yes she could (and that raises another interesting question about 'sheltered accommodation', 'supervision' and 'care', and who's at risk from whom in our civilised Christian society). But I like to think that nobody ever does – sometimes vulnerability and trustiness give their own protection.

Many of us will have seen the cartoon about the eager boy scouts dragging the old lady enthusiastically over a road she doesn't want to cross. It raises a smile, but behind the humour is a very real point. It can be argued that certain sorts of people are in danger of becoming

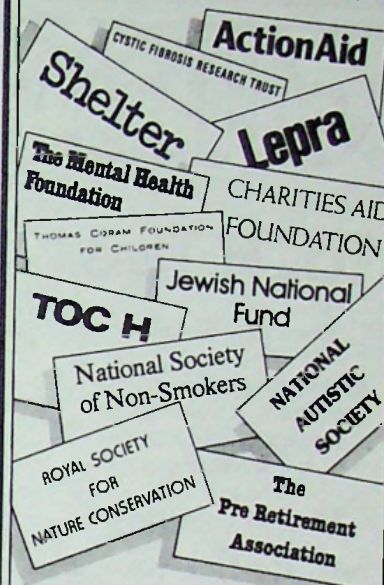
'victims of care'. The elderly, the disabled, the very young, the mentally handicapped, even, possibly, the unemployed have become, in the minds of many, people to do things for. Our motives are of the highest, but is there not a danger of making things worse? Mandy has taught me that the individual's needs for respect, a sense of achievement, independence and 'normal treatment' are just as powerful as needs for help and support – perhaps even more so.

A few years ago I was a UK delegate to an international conference on the needs of the mentally handicapped held in Nairobi, Kenya. Two things stand out in my memory from that occasion. One was the number of delegates from 'third world' countries who could not understand the complicated problems regarding provision for the handicapped. In their villages, the community served one another – 'to each according to their needs'. The other was the urgent message from the many mentally handicapped people at the conference – 'Include us in!' – Not, be it noted, 'Let us in'.

Mandy is for ever telling me that, when she can, she will do things 'by her own self'. Her point of view, and my Nairobi experience, have taught me that 'helping the needy' is not as simple as it seems. I've found I have to start with the thought: 'Is what I propose to do (viz a viz someone else) different because of how I see them? If so, what are my reasons – and, especially, are they good ones? Above all – have I ensured that they have had a voice in what I want to do?' There is a need to take care before we give it.

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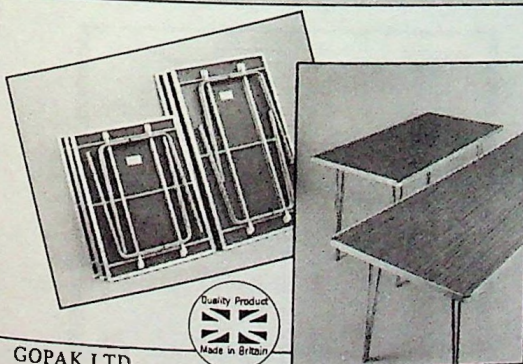
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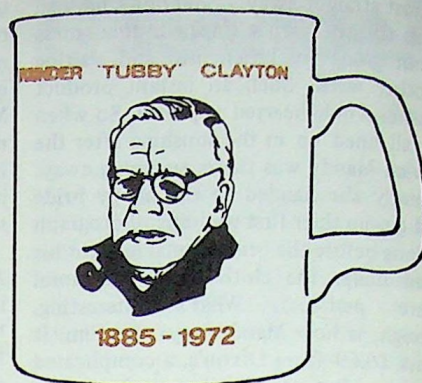
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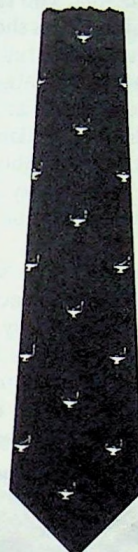
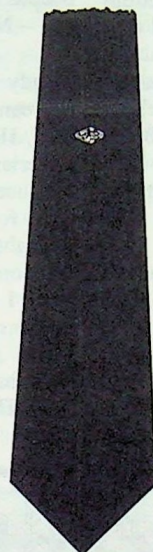
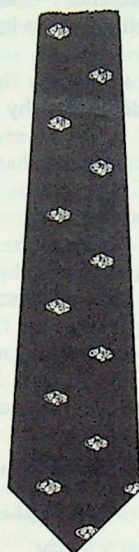
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